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**Testimony Before the Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding  
Opposing a Portion of SB 996, An Act Establishing the  
Connecticut Emergency Economic Investment Commission**

Senator Dally, Representative Staples and members of the Committee, my name is Louise DiCocco-Beauton and I am the Director of Governmental Affairs for the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber appears before you today on behalf of the Tweed New Airport Authority, requesting that you amend a portion of SB 996 which has very serious impact on Tweed.

The Chamber of Commerce has supported Tweed's development for over 50 years. As you may know, Tweed is one of only two Connecticut airports certified as Class I by the Federal Aviation Administration. The Tweed Airport Authority is the only transportation asset in the state run by a regional board of directors. For the past ten years, the State has shared the cost of many airport improvements, in recognition that Tweed has State-wide economic development value. The Transportation Strategy Board recognized this role by endorsing a strategy of support for commercial air service at both Tweed and Bradley.

We are asking the Committee to reject Section 34 of the bill, as this provision would deauthorize a \$5.0 million authorization for renovations, improvements and safety programs at Tweed Airport. The \$5.0 million in capital bonds for Tweed's infrastructure was approved by Special Act 01-2, Section 9(d)(7). Although it was approved 8 years ago, the funding is more essential now than ever, given that the Federal Aviation Administration has seen fit to invest over \$26 million in Tweed's Runway Safety Area Project in the last 18 months.

Because of sensitive site conditions, the Runway Safety Project has had a long history. The Federal Environmental Impact Study was approved in 2001 and CT DEP permits were approved in 2007. Construction started in April 2008 and continues at a steady pace. Far from being unnecessary, the \$5 million in State bond authorization is now timely and essential to carry out related portions of the safety project, specifically related to overall goal of improving the approach zones for safe landing and take-off of aircraft.

On behalf of the Tweed New Haven Airport Authority, the Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests you to restore the \$5 million in approved bond funds for improvements at Tweed New Haven Airport. Thank you for your consideration.